

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-11 FMC-04

INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 CG-00 COA-02 LAB-06 SIL-01

AID-20 PA-03 PRS-01 USIA-12 OMB-01 RSR-01 /088 W

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R 170450Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6905

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

CINCPAC

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AMCONSUL AUCKLAND

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, PFOR, PINT , NZ, XP

1. SUMMARY. CHARGE INFORMED BY MFA DEPUTY SEC NORRISH JULY 13 THAT PM PLANNING ARRANGE MEETING IN OCTOBER OF SHIP OWNERS, SEAGOING UNIONS AND SOUTH PACIFIC GOVERNMENTS IN EFFORT EDUCATE ALL PARTIES REGARDS FACTS OF LIFE IN SOUTH PACIFIC ISLAND SHIPPING AND TRADE. IMMEDIATE REASON FOR CALLING CONFERENCE IS NEARLY TWO MONTH OLD UNION BAN ON HANDLING NAURUAN-OWNED SHIP ENNA G (AIRGRAM FOLLOWS). LONGER TERM GNZ INTEREST IS EFFORT TO OBTAIN SOME ASSURANCE THAT GNZ AID TO ISLANDS WILL NOT BE TORPEDOED BY STRIKES. ALSO WISHES EXERT SOME LEVEL CONTROL OVER NZ SEAMEN'S UNION-- A PROJECT NOT LIKELY TO MEET WITH GREAT SUCCESS. END SUMMARY.

2. GNZ SEES UNION EFFORTS TO OBTAIN HIGHER WAGES FOR ISLAND SEAMEN AS DIRECT THREAT TO AID PROGRAM WHICH SCHEDULED TO BE AT SIXTY MILLION NZ DOLLAR LEVEL IN
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THREE YEARS. BULK OF AID WILL GO TO ISLANDS AND WILL

HAVE LITTLE IMPACT IF FREIGHT RATES UNREASONABLE OR IF SHIPPING TIED UP DUE STRIKES. IN TRYING TO EDUCATE PARTIES GNZ WILL STRESS THIS POINT AS WELL AS NECESSITY FOR ISLAND GOVERNMENTS TO DEAL WITH TRADE UNIONS IN MORE ENLIGHTENED MANNER THAN HAS BEEN PRACTICE IN PAST. FYI. SECLAB HAS STATED THAT SEAMEN DISPUTE WOULD HAVE BEEN SETTLED JULY 11 IF NAURUANS HAD AGREED PAY DOLS4,000 HOTEL COSTS INCURRED BY STRIKING SEAMEN. THIS AMOUNT APPROX SAME AS COST ONE DAY'S LOST TIME FOR SHIP. NAURUANS ADAMANT THAT THIS QUESTION OF PRINCIPLE NOT INTEREST AND BROKE OFF NEGOTIATIONS.END FYI.

3. NORRISH ADMITTED THAT GOVERNMENT'S DESIRE GAIN CONTROL OVER SEAMEN'S UNION WOULD BE DIFFICULT UNDERTAKING. WILLIAM MARTIN, PRESIDENT OF UNION, HAS ANNOUNCED INTENTION OF RETIRING IN VERY NEAR FUTURE. LIKELY SUCCESSORS ARE ALL FURTHER LEFT THAN MARTIN WHO WOULD NEVER BE DESCRIBED AS MODERATE. NATIONAL PARTY GOVERNMENT DEREGISTERED UNION TWO YEARS AGO IN EFFORT CLEAN OUT LEFTIST ELEMENTS WITH LITTLE NOTABLE SUCCESS. MARTIN'S INTENTION RETIRE SEEN IN SOME QUARTERS AS ADMISSION THAT HE UNABLE CONTROL THESE PEOPLE.

4. NORRISH'S COMMENTS FOLLOW SIMILAR STATEMENT BY DEP PM (AND MINLAB) WATT TO CHARGE AND LABATT SEVERAL WEEKS AGO. WATT NOTED THAT ISLAND GOVERNMENTS IN GENERAL(AND TONGANS AND NAURUANS IN PARTICULAR) ARE RELUCTANT TO DEAL WITH TRADE UNIONISTS AND THAT THERE MIGHT BE CONSIDERABLE DIFFICULTY IN CONVINCING THE VARIOUS GOVERNMENTS INVOLVED OF THE DESIRABILITY OF ATTENDING MEETING.

5. COMMENT. REAL REASON FOR BANNING WORK ON ENNA G HAS BEEN SEAMEN'S UNION DESIRE PRESERVE JOBS FOR NZ SAILORS. ANY OTHER ISLANDER OWNED/MANNED SHIPS LIKELY TO FACT SIMILAR BANS. THIS IS WELL UNDERSTOOD BY GNZ AND PACIFIC ISLANDERS AND HAS RESULTED IN A GREAT DEAL OF EMBARRASSMENT FOR KIRK GOVERNMENT IN ITS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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RELATIONS WITH ISLANDERS. LATTER FEEL THAT NZ SEAMEN ARE INTERFERING IN DOMESTIC ISLAND AFFAIRS AND THAT GNZ (WHICH HAS REFUSED TO INTERVENE DIRECTLY WITH UNION OR DENOUNCE BAN) IS EFFECTIVELY AIDING AND ABETTING SEAMEN. KIRK IS KNOWN TO BE THOROUGHLY FED UP WITH SEAMEN'S UNION BUT EVIDENTLY FEELS THAT HE IS NOT IN POSITION AT MOMENT TO DO MORE THAN TRY TO EDUCATE THEM.

NZ SEAMEN'S PAY AND NZ GNP ABOUT THREE TIMES AS
HIGH AS AVERAGES FOR ISLANDERS. SO ISLAND GOVERNMENTS
CANNOT AFFORD NZ RATES IN HANDLING THEIR EXPORTS/
IMPORTS.
WOOD

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